

# **Community-Based Job Training Grants**

*Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas*

**Grantee:** Phillips Community College of the University of Arkansas

**Industry Focus:** Energy

**Key Partners:** Arkansas Delta Training and Education Consortium; Arkansas State University and Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges; Eastern Arkansas Workforce Investment Board; local One-Stop Career Centers; and Arkansas State Workforce Investment Board; five area secondary technical centers serving 33 school districts; U.S. Canadian Biofuels; FutureFuel Chemical; WinRock International; Department of Workforce Services and Department of Workforce Education; and the Arkansas Delta WIRED Region

**Grant Amount:** \$1,986,735

**Leveraged Amount:** \$14,132,402

**Location of Grant Activities:** 12 counties in Eastern Arkansas

**Challenge:** The desire for reduced national reliance on foreign, petroleum-based fuels has invigorated the nation's alternative energy industry. In the Arkansas Delta region, six bio-refineries are in production or under construction, and more refineries are in the planning stages. Current projections reveal that a minimum of 200 skilled technicians need to be available to support renewable energy production facilities during the next three years. Continued economic development is tied to the ability to train and educate the workforce. Community colleges currently lack the capacity to support the development of this workforce.

**Addressing the Challenge:** The Arkansas Delta Renewable Energy Training and Education Initiative will seek to raise the skill level of the workforce through: 1) creating the Center for Excellence for Renewable Energy Technology to create training materials and programs of study, provide region-wide support to the renewable energy industry, and create career pathways in renewable energy technology; 2) creating a pool of funds for tuition and training fees jointly accessed by community colleges and One-Stop Career Centers; 3) creating capacity to train workers in each of the region's five community colleges; and 4) developing partnerships between community colleges and the workforce investment system to facilitate enrollment of participants and tracking of common measures.

**Projected Outcomes:**

- Train a minimum of 550 workers for jobs in the renewable energy industry
- Immediately enroll at least 50 high school juniors and seniors in alternative energy career pathways, and expand enrollment to 100 students

